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Conceptualizing Multicultural Perspective Taking Skills

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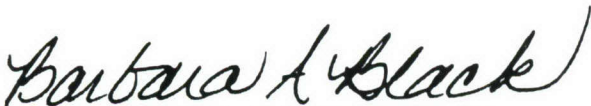United States Army Research Institute
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U. S. Army leaders are increasingly required to engage in full-spectrum operations that include a multinational or multicultural component. Army leaders must develop cultural understanding and skills in order to work effectively in multinational alliances, to anticipate and respond to adversary intent, and to interact successfully with local populations. The ability to take the perspective of *individuals* within the context of their culture enables Army leaders to understand other cultures at a level finer than that afforded by simply using global cultural dimensions alone. Perspective taking is a skill that may play a role in working effectively with diverse individuals across cultural boundaries. Individual level perspective taking is a cognitive process by which an individual is able to identify the thoughts and/or feelings of another. The competencies identified as contributing to multicultural perspective taking include fundamental competencies of self-awareness, personal and interpersonal skills, and regional expertise, and advanced competencies of extraction, interpretation, and a schema for culture. This paper describes a conceptual framework for multicultural perspective taking skills and makes recommendations for training those skills.

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Cultural Awareness, Cultural Understanding, Cultural Intelligence, Perspective Taking, Interpersonal Skills, Competencies

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Multicultural Perspective Taking Skills

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CONCEPTUALIZING MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE TAKING SKILLS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research Requirement:

Increasingly, the United States Army operates in multinational, and therefore, multicultural, environments. Teamwork within such settings requires the ability to see events as members of other cultures see them. The goal of the research was to define a set of multicultural perspective taking skills that will enable Army leaders to function effectively in multinational alliances.

Procedure:

Researchers reviewed literature from the disciplines of cultural anthropology, social anthropology, cognitive anthropology, counseling psychology, developmental psychology, social psychology, organizational psychology, organizational behavior, international business, and adult education and development. Conceptualizations of culture and the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) contributing to multicultural perspective taking were extracted. The literature reviewed was drawn primarily from the academic domain and included such topics as cross-cultural counseling psychology, person perception, cross-cultural person perception, cultural intelligence, police interrogation (tactical questioning), global and international business, intercultural conflict management, intercultural competence, intercultural training, intercultural communication, diversity and cultural awareness training.

Findings:

Two major categories containing six sets of multicultural perspective taking competencies were identified. Fundamental competencies are self-awareness, personal and interpersonal skills, and regional expertise. Advanced competencies are extraction skills, interpretation skills, and the development of cultural schema. Each set of competencies contains many specific KSAs. The compentency framework is presented to highlight the relationships among the compentencies. Understanding these relationships will aid in determining training sequencing.

Utilization and Dissemination of Findings:

These findings can inform training development and guide further research on the skills needed to function effectively in multicultural environments. Traditional cultural awareness training typically focuses on understanding members of another culture from an American's perspective. However, augmenting this training by addressing multicultural perspective taking competencies will afford Army leaders broader cross-cultural capability. In developing such training, training principles from industrial/organizational psychology and the organizational training literature should be applied. In addition, best practices for adult learning should be incorporated.

CONCEPTUALIZING MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE TAKING SKILLS

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CONCEPTUALIZING MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE TAKING SKILLS

Project Overview

Multicultural Perspective taking is Important to the United States Army

Increasingly, the United States Army operates in multinational, and therefore, multicultural, environments. U. S. Army leaders must meet the challenges of these environments, which are frequently complicated by distributed communications and time-compressed, complex, dynamic, and data-rich conditions. However, little is known about how to rapidly form and support groups in these types of environments (Driskell, Radtke, & Salas, 2003). U. S. Army leaders who lack the interpersonal knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to operate in these environments will likely experience confusion, conflict, inefficiency, and ultimately failure. Strongly developed interpersonal competencies are essential to successfully, and quickly, build teams within multicultural environments.

The term multicultural is used here to emphasize that culture exists not only at the national level, but also with respect to ethnic group, religion, region, organization, profession, and so on. Therefore, within any nation it is likely that multiple cultures will exist.

Multicultural perspective taking skills are a set of competencies that enable effective joint, interagency, and multinational (JIM) operations. The "Initial Impressions Report on Leader Challenges: Operation Enduring Freedom & Operation Iraqi Freedom" (IIR, 2005) emphasized the need to improve Soldiers' ability to operate in a multicultural environment and highlighted the inadequacies of the current cultural awareness training, which addresses rudimentary cultural knowledge. However, as leaders' contact with local populations, including contact with individuals at high political levels, increases, they require knowledge related to socio-political relationships, governing structures, interpersonally sensitive issues (e.g., face, power structures, privacy, formality, loyalty), valued items (e.g., money), business practices, religion, social customs, and so on. For example, understanding that private behavior does not necessarily reflect public behavior or a person's intention is critical in many cultures.

Even within the American organizations, cultural differences create complications. For example, civilian and military cultural differences may increase collaborative difficulty (e.g., civilians may not respond to orders and they may not accept military leadership). Cultural differences at the organizational and professional levels must be also addressed.

The multicultural perspective taking approach is designed to remedy the shortcomings of the current approach to leader cultural training by identifying fundamental and advanced competencies for operating in multicultural environments, which include national, regional, socio-political, organizational and professional cultural influences. The multicultural perspective taking approach is designed to enable leaders and Soldiers at the direct, organizational, and strategic levels to extract, interpret, and utilize cultural information.

U. S. Army leaders who possess well-developed multicultural perspective taking skills should have increased ability to decipher novel cultural information encountered in any situation

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or environment. Multicultural perspective taking skills are a set of competencies that enable leaders to make sense of and understand individuals' perspectives (i.e., understandings) of situations. The ability to take-perspective in this way will enable leaders to interact with others and to function effectively within a new culture. The behavior of others that was previously mysterious will be interpretable by leaders who possess well-developed multicultural perspective taking skills.

The United States Army Needs to Know More about Multicultural Perspective taking

The United States Army needs to know more about multicultural perspective taking for at least five reasons. First, currently, leaders are not receiving training that prepares them to function most effectively in novel cultures. For example, McFate (2005) reported that a commander from an infantry division stated, "I had perfect situational awareness. What I lacked was cultural awareness" (McFate, p. 43) McFate suggested that cultural knowledge should be a national priority. The IIR (2005) indicated that the current cultural awareness training for the Army is inadequate. It was reported that leaders believed "general education to develop the knowledge and skills related to understanding social structures would be more helpful than the specific cultural awareness training" (p. 35). The current training is considered basic and in some cases erroneous (p. 71, IIR).

Second, Army leaders need resources for understanding many different cultures. Leaders are faced with cultural differences associated with their fellow Soldiers, each branch of the military, U.S. agencies, coalition partners, friendly local nationals, enemies, insurgents, and so on. McFate (2005) reported that a Special Forces colonel revealed, "We literally don't know where to go for information on what makes other society's tick, so we use Google to make policy" (p. 46). Apparently, Army leaders are not supplied with the resources for understanding and working in unfamiliar multicultural environments.

Third, the United States seems to be trailing other nations with respect to abilities related to working effectively in other cultures. For example, it would appear that potential enemy soldiers might be more effective in understanding cultural differences than the U. S. Army Soldier. The IIR included evidence that not only are Arab/Muslim soldiers are more familiar with U.S. culture, they are also aware that U.S. Soldiers are unfamiliar with Arab/Muslim culture. Additionally, it was reported that in many cases, individuals from other cultures are aware that they do not know the American culture. Furthermore, these individuals are aware that Americans do not understand their culture.

Stewart and Bennett (1991) noted, "Americans frequently have difficulties in communicating and cooperating with their foreign counterparts. The original obstacles to cross-cultural understanding may be conceptualized as differences in cultural assumptions and values. The Americans' values and assumptions prevent them from objectively perceiving and understanding the underpinnings of the behavior of their counterparts. Their performance overseas would be enhanced if they understood both their own culture and that of their counterparts" (Stewart & Bennett, 1991, p. 174).

Anecdotal evidence supports the notion that individuals from other countries tend to be better able to detect and decode cultural differences than Americans, possibly because they have an attitude that they need to understand others. For example, the second author was once told by a Dane "We don't expect other people to speak Danish; we're a small country." In addition, others, for example Europeans, Canadians, and Australians, tend to travel internationally more than Americans and have more experience with cultures other than their own.

Fourth, the Initial Impressions Report emphasized that cultural training should include language, history, culture and customs, and it strongly emphasized the need for interpersonal competency. Specifically, the IIR suggested that leaders should be supplied "with a basis to better understand any culture in which they are operating, not just the specific culture of current theaters (p. 35)."

Fifth, traditional approaches to training cultural understanding are not sufficient for providing U.S. Army leaders with the complex competencies required to function effectively in multicultural environments. The Army needs to take a ground-breaking approach to improving its ability to operate in multicultural environments by training and developing its leaders' versatility in functioning in novel and multiple cultures. The multicultural perspective taking approach is focused on increasing leaders' ability to extract, interpret, understand, and utilize cultural information in any culture.

Purpose and Overview of the Report

The goal of the research project reported here was to define a set of multicultural perspective taking skills that will enable Army leaders to function effectively in multicultural (including multinational) operations. This research was conducted by reviewing relevant literature. Data collection was beyond the scope of this project; this effort instead lays out ideas to be tested in future research.

The report is structured as follows. First, the scope of the literature reviewed is articulated. Then, definitions of culture from various research literatures are presented. Next, three levels of Army leadership, direct, organizational, and strategic, are described, because multicultural perspective taking is related to each level. The next major section presents the multicultural perspective taking competencies. This section includes defining the competencies in two broad categories and providing an organizational framework of the interrelationships among them. The last major section presents recommendations for future research on multicultural perspective taking.

KSAs necessary for competence in multicultural perspective taking and for training these competencies were extracted from extant research in a wide variety of literatures on an array of topics. Culture, cross-cultural, inter-cultural, multi-cultural, global, international, and multinational are terms relevant to many fields of study including cultural anthropology, social anthropology, cognitive anthropology, counseling psychology, developmental psychology, social psychology, organizational psychology, organizational behavior, international business, and adult education and development. Research on such topics as cross-cultural counseling psychology, person perception, cross-cultural person perception, cultural intelligence, police

interrogation (tactical questioning), global and international business, intercultural conflict management, intercultural competence, intercultural training, intercultural communication, diversity and cultural awareness training approached from the many fields contribute to the understanding of multicultural perspective taking. The literature reviewed was drawn primarily from the academic domain.

Culture

Culture is a complex phenomenon that involves beliefs, laws, morals, customs, values, assumptions, and thoughts. It is communicated through such artifacts as heroes, symbols, stories, and rituals, and is patterned, shared, and dynamic. A major component of culture is collective sensemaking and the social construction of reality. Thus, culture can be conceptualized as a shared cognitive frame of reference (Louis, 1980). Multicultural perspective taking skills are aimed at deciphering the frame of reference, sensemaking, and interpretive aspects of another's cultural lens.

It should also be noted that culture has many foci. Culture exists with respect to any collection of individuals including groups (e.g., social groups, ethnic groups, sport groups, platoons), professions, organizations, nations, and so on. Indeed, individuals may belong simultaneously to multiple cultural units and be simultaneously affected by them (Chao & Moon, 2005). Thus, each individual has his or her own understanding or worldview, and portions of that understanding overlap with others' understandings. Multicultural perspective taking requires the perspective-taker to understand and to consider the various cultural influences on an individual or group of individuals, because cultural influences affect how one perceives and how one is perceived.

Definitions of Culture

Culture is a complicated phenomenon and defining it completely is challenging. Fortunately, common themes run through definitions of culture regardless of whether the locus of interest is profession, work unit, team, ethnic group, organization, religion, region, country, and so on.

These themes include the notion that culture is learned. Training that involves modifying the mind, emotions, social behaviors, tastes, and so on serves as one developmental mechanism. Another theme is that culture involves knowledge, beliefs, laws, morals, customs, and patterns of learned behavior and thoughts. Culture is communicated through artifacts, symbols, stories, rituals and so on. Culture is also the conceptualizations, skills, arts, and institutions of a set of people. An important theme is that cultural understandings are shared among members of a group, because culture's function is to provide solutions to potential and actual problems. Group members pass cultural interpretations to newcomers (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

This complex phenomenon, culture, has intrigued researchers in many fields who have attempted to define and study it. Below, we present features of culture that are highlighted in anthropology and sociology, intercultural communication and psychology, and organizational research.

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Features of Culture Highlighted in Anthropology and Sociology

Anthropology provides several definitions of culture; a sample is provided below.

One well-accepted anthropological definition of culture was presented by Kluckhohn. "Culture consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values" (Kluckhohn, 1951, as cited in Hofstede, 1980, p. 86).

With respect to determining the formation and development of culture, Ong stated, "'culture' is taken as historically situated and emergent, shifting and incomplete meanings and practices generated in webs of agency and power. Cultural change is not understood as unfolding according to some predetermined logic (of development, modernization, or capitalism) but as the disrupted, contradictory, and differential outcomes which involves changes in identity, relations of struggle and dependence, including the experience of reality itself" (Ong, 1987, pp. 2-3).

The cognitive approach to anthropology argues that culture "comprises the ideas, beliefs, and knowledge that characterize a particular group of people" (Fetterman, 1989, p. 27). This perspective highlights the cognitive aspects of culture at the exclusion of behavior.

Kroeber and Parsons (1958), sociologists, defined culture as "transmitted and created content and patterns of values, ideas, and other symbolic-meaningful systems as factors in the shaping of human behavior and the artifacts produced through behavior" (p. 583).

In summary, anthropologists highlight that culture is traditional, is learned, affects identity, is conveyed through symbols, is situated and emergent, and reflects patterns (e.g., of thinking, feeling, and reacting) (Fetterman, 1989; Kluckhohn, 1951; Ong, 1987). Sociologists have a similar perspective on culture and highlight that it is transmitted, is created, is symbolic, and shapes behavior (e.g., Kroeber & Parsons, 1958).

Features of Culture Highlighted in Intercultural Communication and Psychology

By defining culture as communication (Hall, 1959), including the silent language of non-verbal communication, anthropologist E. T. Hall became the father of the field of intercultural communication. Culture is the code that leaders must crack in order to work in multicultural environments effectively.

Other definitions emphasize the functional aspects of culture:

Culture is the sum total of ways of living, including values, beliefs, esthetic standards, linguistic expression, patterns of thinking, behavioral norms, and styles of communication which a group of people has developed to assure its survival in a particular physical and human environment. Culture and the people who are a part of it interact so that culture is not static. Culture is the response of

a group of human beings to the valid and particular needs of its members. It, therefore, has an inherent logic and an essential balance between positive and negative dimensions" (Hoopes, 1979, p. 3, as cited in Hess, 1994, p. 4).

Triandis (1972) distinguished subjective and objective aspects of culture. Objective culture includes the observable artifacts and provides the basis and expression of the subjective culture. According to Triandis, subjective culture refers to ways in which group members commonly perceive their objective environment. It should be noted that the objective environment is that which is "man-made," that is, the artifacts.

In summary, these approaches define culture in terms of the functions it serves for its members, emphasizing that communication is comprised of and conveys culture and that culture provides its members with solutions for survival (Hess, 1994). Psychologists add focus on the objective and subjective aspects of culture (e.g., Triandis, 1972).

Features of Culture Highlighted in Organizational Research

Culture in organizations refers to the organizational members' shared beliefs and values that influence their thoughts and behavior. It also refers to a "set of cognitions" acquired through socialization and interactions. Members of a social unit share a set of cognitions (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988, p.247). One aspect of culture is the meaning that it provides individuals as they interpret their world (Rentsch, 1990).

According to Schein (1990), culture is "(a) a pattern of basic assumptions, (b) invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, (c) as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, (d) that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore (e) is to be taught to new members as the (f) correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems" (p.111). Schein (1985) has emphasized culture as being a system of shared meanings that exist within a group. These meanings are enacted. According to Schein, culture is reflected in artifacts, values, and tacit assumptions. Schein also emphasized that leaders' values are reflected in the organizational culture.

Within organizational research, culture is viewed as highly subjective, existing at an unconscious (subconscious) level, consisting of layers of cognition (Schein, 1985) based on assumptions about the way things are and the ways of dealing with the world. It is the social process that occurs within a group of people who hold a common set of assumptions, world views, values, behavioral norms, and material artifacts (Rousseau, 1988).

Hofstede (1980), focusing on culture at the national level, defined culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another" (p. 25). He presents culture as the collective analogue to personality at the individual level, citing Guildord's (1959, as cited in Hofstede) definition of personality as "the interactive aggregate of personal characteristics that influence a human group's response to its environment."

Louis (1980) emphasized the importance of interaction and socialization in organizational culture by adopting a definition of culture as a cognitive frame of reference. Culture is the pattern of cognition and the pattern of behavior transferred to each generation of the group. Louis emphasized several aspects of culture including psychological dimensions, historical and sociological factors, and cross-cultural factors. She notes that common understandings organize action and are expressed in nuanced language understood by the group.

Another conceptualization of culture is as a mosaic (Chao & Moon, 2005). Within this perspective, culture is conceptualized as a complex pattern of cultural identities based on demographic, geographic, and associative features within individuals. From this perspective, all individuals have access to multiple cultural identities, and identities are activated based on their strength, compatibility, and contextual demands. These identities become shared among others within an interpersonal network. Individuals who share identities with others may serve to bridge others who do not share cultural identities (Chao & Moon, 2005).

Another perspective views culture as the social or normative "glue" that serves to coordinate action in organizations (e.g., Tichy, 1982). Culture is an expression of shared values, social ideals, and beliefs (Louis, 1980). The shared values and belief patterns are manifested in such symbols as myths, rituals, stories, and nuanced language.

Intensity of culture is also discussed in organizational research. Intensity is the degree to which the content(s) is/are emphasized (Rousseau, 1988). Organizational cultures are considered to be weak when key values are not intensely shared, but strong when they are shared. (The strength of cultures may become important when considering cultural differences across military and civilian organizations or cultures across various services.)

In summary, organizational researchers define culture by culling from anthropology, sociology, intercultural communications, and psychology. They highlight cultural features such as learned, shared, functional, reflected in artifacts, and patterned. In addition, they emphasize the individual members of a culture, describing culture as a primary source of identity for its members (e.g., Chao & Moon, 2005; Louis, 1980; Schein, 1990) and as varying in degrees of intensity among the individual members (Rousseau, 1988).

Summary

The definitions of culture from anthropology and sociology, intercultural communication and psychology, and organizational research have many common features. One pervasive and important feature of culture is that serves as a lens through which one perceives and makes sense of the environment (Rousseau, 1988). Thus, multiple cultures provide the cognitions or schemas individuals use to understand the world (e.g., Sackmann, 1992). Learning to see the world through the cultural lens and eyes of another is a key to success in a multicultural environment, and is the essence of multicultural perspective taking.

Army leaders must recognize that culture affects how one perceives others and how one is perceived by others. As the "silent language" of nonverbal communication (Hall, 1981, originally published in 1959), culture is the code that must be cracked in order to work

effectively in multicultural environments. We suggest that Army leaders need to go one step further and be able to predict the behavior of others, and that multicultural perspective taking will aid them in doing so.

Direct, Organizational, and Strategic Levels of Leadership

Astute understanding of culture at the direct, organizational, and strategic levels is necessary. Decisions made at each level affect the other levels directly or indirectly. Each level requires multicultural perspective taking skills, but the nature or focus of the skills required at each level may differ. Below, cultural issues and the need for multicultural perspective taking skills at each level are illustrated.

Direct: Cultural Ignorance Kills

Insufficient understanding of the local culture may put civilians and Soldiers at risk. The direct level involves a "boots on the ground" perspective, because leaders at this level are interacting primarily with peers, host nationals, and to some extent, coalition partners, or NGOs. However, at the direct level, cultural misunderstandings may be deadly. For example, McFate writes: "The American gesture for stop (arm straight, palm out) means welcome in Iraq, whereas the gesture for go means stop to Iraqis (arm straight, palm down). This and similar misunderstandings have had deadly consequences" (p. 44).

Leaders need to understand the immediate environment where their lives are constantly at risk. Leaders trained by the Army may understand how to work in the military culture with diverse people from the U.S., and they may understand their mission and the risks associated with it. However, they need additional skills to be able to operate in a new foreign environment. On a day-to-day basis, these leaders must be able to communicate, engage, and cooperate with not-necessarily hospitable others while simultaneously understanding their own roles (which may be shifting) within this context.

At the direct level, usually, at least initially, much about the host country including its topography, customs, history, and language are unfamiliar. Leaders at this level will benefit from understanding these features and many other features of the host country including its socio-political-historical context.

Training of multicultural perspective taking skills that includes general cross-cultural and culture-specific foci can aid leaders in understanding the country's cultural features. Such training may include information and skill training related to governing relationships/structure (power), concepts and means of face saving (private vs. public information sharing/communication), centers of loyalty, and power of commodities (e.g., money). At the direct level, some understanding of the languages, religions, and customs including those that may be readily apparent and those that may be extremely subtle will be beneficial.

Multicultural perspective taking skills are needed that enable leaders to extract and interpret relevant cultural information. A strong emphasis on personal and interpersonal skills is

likely required at the direct level. Negotiations conducted at the tactical level may impact the organizational and strategic levels.

Organizational: Cultural Ignorance Promotes Negative Public Opinion

The organizational leaders' view of the situation is "above" that of the "man on the street," because they must fully understand the actions that are in the best interests of the unit. These leaders must take into account cultural differences in order to address a larger plan. In addition, these leaders must address multiple "cultures" including not only those internal to their respective unit, but also those associated with other organizations and nations.

Leaders at the organizational level are responsible for communicating, engaging, and facilitating cooperation with groups that are not necessarily hospitable, including host nationals, coalition forces, and, to some extent, NGOs. These leaders must motivate others to do the same and work with others from culturally dissimilar groups to achieve common goals.

At the organizational level, leaders must understand the relevant multiple cultures in the environment, including the cultural differences within a country and between the countries within a region. This understanding should also incorporate an understanding of how the Army can effectively operate within a host country and with its counterparts. Leaders at the organizational level must be able to understand cross-cultural issues and be able to translate them for others working on the team. This understanding must include both cultural differences and similarities. In addition, leaders at the organizational level serve as bridges to the higher levels. Therefore, they must be able to convey accurate and relevant cultural information to facilitate decision-making at higher levels.

Cultural ignorance at the organizational level has many likely implications. For example, a Marine in Iraq reported that attempts to influence public opinion using Iraqi media networks were not effective because Iraqis disseminate information through gossip. "Instead of tapping into their networks, we should have visited their coffee shops" (McFate, p. 44). Ineffective actions (with respect to culture) at the organizational level may not only translate into missed-opportunities for conveying information and influencing opinion, but more alarmingly, may provoke negative public opinion of American forces and/or efforts among the host nationals. Decisions and actions at the organizational level of leadership will affect direct and strategic leaders.

Multicultural perspective taking competencies will aid organizational leaders in understanding the dynamics of military power in the context of a host country that may have one or more agenda different from that of the U.S. Army. For example, these leaders need to understand how to motivate others from various cultures, how to differentiate friendlies from enemies and how to interact with them appropriately, and how to train others in these distinctions. In addition, at the organizational level, it is essential to understand that different organizational cultures may exist within the enemy forces (i.e., insurgency forces) and that different organizational cultures may exist within the allied forces (e.g., across agencies, across branches of the military, units within a branch of the military). These leaders are often developing leadership skills and cultural understanding on the job. Thus, organizational-level

leaders may benefit from learning techniques that aid them in acquiring cultural acumen during on-the-job training.

Strategic: Cultural Ignorance Leads to Destructive Policies

At the strategic level (i.e., the "35,000 foot view"), senior leaders and policy-makers must realize the challenges faced by leaders in direct and organizational positions and provide them with appropriate resources to meet those challenges. Strategic leaders must also consider the broader socio-political and strategic environment in order to appropriately direct those actions.

Potential effects of cultural ignorance at the strategic level include destructive policies that inadvertently bolster the enemy. Cultural ignorance may result in a failure to anticipate enemy strategy and tactics or failure to anticipate the second- and third-order effects of leader decisions. Moreover, cultural ignorance may lead to missed opportunities to forge or strengthen beneficial alliances. A long term (prospective and retrospective) cultural context must be considered in making strategic decisions.

Leaders at the strategic level require multicultural perspective taking competencies that promote the understanding of foreign operations. They need to know how to motivate people in these environments, know the geopolitical interrelationships among relevant units/groups, and know how to use military power in the context of host countries and among coalition members (especially those that may have agendas differing from those of the U.S.).

Leadership Development: "Being a leader never stops"

"Leadership is influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improve the organization (IIR, p. iii, 2005)." The IIR noted that junior leaders are being given increasingly higher levels of responsibility including planning and executing missions that were formerly the responsibility of senior leaders. In the case of company-level leaders, this means that they are interacting more frequently with host nationals and with others from various cultures. The increased responsibilities create developmental opportunities for leaders at lower levels, but they also require the leaders to possess complex skills including multicultural perspective taking skills. One area for research on multicultural perspective taking is to develop training sequences that capitalize on these opportunities.

Although all leaders seemingly need the opportunity to learn about, and ability to function effectively in, another culture as quickly as possible, there may be different multicultural perspective taking requirements at each leadership level. However, additional information is needed in order to make clear recommendations regarding the specific unique requirements for each level of leadership.

Multicultural Perspective taking

Successful leadership, particularly with respect to team building, is challenging in a multinational context due to ambiguities associated with working with people from other cultures. For example, members of Western cultures tend to attribute ambiguous behavior to the individual rather than to external factors. In contrast, members of Eastern cultures are less inclined to make such attributions (Knowles, Morris, Chiu, & Hong, 2001). These attributional tendencies in combination with diverse culturally derived time perspectives create scenarios for ineffective collaboration (Saji, 2004). For example, a Westerner will tend to attribute an Easterner's tardiness to dispositional characteristics such as laziness, whereas an Easterner might attribute it to external causes such as other obligations. Such an attribution (particularly if it is incorrect) will produce misinterpretations likely resulting in frustration, decreased trust, and potentially, conflict (e.g., Baron, 1997). The situation will be exacerbated to the extent that members are from cultures in which talking about disputes runs counter to cultural norms (Von Glinow, Shapiro, & Brett, 2004).

The ability to take the perspective of individuals within the context of their culture is critical for effective collaboration and coordination with coalition partners and host nationals, and for gaining an advantage ever the enemy. Multicultural perspective taking competencies are required to understand the world as another individual does by taking into account the cultural context in which the individual lives. That is, multicultural perspective taking skills enable leaders to see the world through another's cultural and personal lenses.

Cultural influences, as noted above, are complex. Therefore, in order to be able to take the perspective of another who is from a different culture, leaders must understand how to identify cultural components, understand their influences on individuals, and understand how to interpret key cultural information. In addition, leaders must be able to identify and interpret an individual's unique understandings and cultural lenses.

The ability to take the perspective of individuals within the context of their culture enables Army leaders to understand other cultures at a level finer than the understanding of culture afforded by simply using global cultural dimensions alone (e.g., Hofstede, 2001). Perspective taking is the active consideration of another's point of view (Galinsky, 2002) and is a skill related to empathy that may play a role in the effectiveness of working with diverse individuals. Individual level perspective taking is a cognitive process by which an individual is able to identify the thoughts and/or feelings of another. Eisenberg, Wentzel, and Harris (1998) defined cognitive perspective taking as "the process in which an individual tries to understand another's internal states and thoughts by cognitively placing himself or herself in the other person's situation."

Perspective taking is similar to such concepts as role taking, role perception, and empathy (Davis, 1994; Galinsky, 2002; Sessa, 1996). Perspective taking has been defined as a dispositional and as a cognitive process (Davis, 1994). The focus of the present work is on cognitive perspective taking, which has been defined as "the process in which one individual attempts to imagine the world of another" (Davis, 1994) and as "the cognitive process of

understanding how another person thinks and feels about the situation and why they are behaving as they are" (Sessa, 1996, p. 105).

Within social-cognition research, perspective taking is highly related to (or confused with) other concepts. Perspective taking should not be confused with schema accuracy. Schema accuracy in this context refers to the extent to which the observer's schema of the actor is accurate. Although researchers sometimes assess accuracy and then make assertions about perspective taking, Davis (1994) notes that "accuracy in predicting others' thoughts or emotions is not prima facie evidence of successful role taking, nor is inaccuracy necessarily evidence of role taking failure." In other words, one may have an idea about how another thinks, but may not be able or willing to put oneself cognitively in the "other's shoes."

Unlike empathy, individual level perspective taking does not require the individual to experience another's emotions (Duan & Hill, 1996). Individual perspective taking is related to a decreased tendency to commit person perception errors (e.g., fundamental attribution error, self-serving bias; Reimer, 2001). High individual perspective taking tends to be reciprocal such that those high in this ability are also able to offer information about their positions and feelings, and they frame their information in a manner that others can understand and interpret easily (Feffer & Suchotliff, 1966; Sermat & Smyth, 1973).

Multicultural perspective taking competencies enable leaders to take the perspective of another within the cultural context. Multicultural perspective taking competencies include the abilities to extract, interpret, and understand cultural information, thereby affording the leader flexibility in applying cultural lenses. Perhaps most importantly, multicultural perspective taking competencies enable leaders to adapt quickly when they encounter individuals or groups from unfamiliar or novel cultures. These competencies may also enable leaders to communicate more effectively regarding their own culture. Thus, to the extent that Army leaders possess the set of multicultural perspective taking competencies their likelihood of success in different cultures may increase.

Acquiring multicultural perspective taking competencies involves a complex learning process. Research in developmental psychology that investigated the development of perspective taking and empathy in children (Flavell, 1968; Selman, 1971; Selman, 1977) provides a possible framework for training multicultural perspective taking. First, perspective-takers must be able to suspend egocentric thought (Gladstein, 1983) by understanding that mental states, including thoughts and emotions, exist and that their mental states many not be the same as those of another. Although most normal adults have developed the ability to suspend egocentric thought, in situations perceived as risky or in situations evoking intense emotion, normal adults find it difficult to do so and therefore, are unable to take others' perspectives (Johnson, 1971). Second, perspective-takers must understand that sometimes in order to obtain knowledge about another's mental state, they must exert effort. Third, perspective-takers must develop the ability to obtain knowledge through inference, previous experience, or other processes (e.g., nonverbal cues). Fourth, perspective-takers must develop the ability to apply their knowledge in specific situations (Flavell, 1968).

Perspective taking skills can and have been trained in clinical and organizational settings (e.g., Davis, Conklin, Smith, & Luce, 1996; Duan & Hill, 1996; Long, Angera, Carter, Nakamoto, & Kalso, 1999; Ray & Ray, 1986; Rogers, 1975; Sessa, 1996). Methods used for training perspective taking takes many forms. Some common components include emphasizing the need to recognize another's roles or imagining oneself in the other's situation; practicing suspension of one's own mental states and inferring another's preferences; focusing on situational cues (e.g., nonverbal behavior); and imagining the others' thoughts and feelings (Long et al., 1999; Ray & Ray, 1986; Rogers; 1975; Sessa, 1996).

Multicultural perspective taking is complex and involves multiple competencies. Multicultural perspective taking competencies, utilized in combination, will increase leaders' cultural understanding and therefore, their ability to interact with and function in another culture. These competencies are presented in two sets: fundamental and advanced.

Fundamental multicultural perspective taking competencies are those competencies that leaders will likely develop for effective functioning as leaders. These competencies are needed by leaders in any context. However, some of them overlap with the competencies required for multicultural perspective taking. The Army is currently addressing these competencies in training, but several specific competency components within this category that have particular relevance to multicultural perspective taking are highlighted below.

Advanced multicultural perspective taking competencies are those that must be developed and utilized in combination with the fundamental competencies. The advanced competencies enable leaders to obtain cultural information "on site" and to evaluate and interpret it. Below, the competency sets and specific competencies within each set are described.

Fundamental Competencies to Support Multicultural Perspective taking

Fundamental competencies to support multicultural perspective taking are those competencies that are relevant to leadership in any context. The Army is already training fundamental competencies (Halpin, 2005). However, Army leaders may need additional training focused on comprehending the links between these competencies and their usefulness in operating in a multicultural environment.

Three sets of Fundamental Competencies are discussed below: self-awareness, personal and interpersonal, and regional expertise. The purpose of the discussion below is to emphasize competencies within these sets that are most essential to multicultural perspective taking.

Self-Awareness Competencies

The Self-awareness set of competencies is associated with leaders gaining an understanding of themselves through self-development. Self-development is defined as "The ability to achieve continued psychological growth through self-awareness... " (Organizational Research Group, 1998). It includes the ability to develop self-confidence, an awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, and the ability to balance one's work and personal lives (Organizational Research Group, 1998). Self-development is an essential component for leader development (Browning & Van Velsor, 1999; Essens, Vogelaar, Mylle, Blendell, Paris, Halpin,

& Baranski, 2005). Self-development increases one's self understanding with respect to all aspects of self.

Self-awareness is one of the starting points for understanding the culture of others (e.g., Hofstede, 2001; Pedersen, 2004). Several areas of self-awareness likely to be closely associated with the ability to take perspectives in multicultural contexts include: knowledge of one's strengths and weaknesses, self-confidence with respect to competencies relevant to multicultural perspective taking, ability to achieve continued psychological growth, skills related to emotional intelligence, knowledge of one's own cultural values and biases, awareness of one's idiosyncratic biases, and knowledge and understanding of the influence of one's perspective on his/her interactions and perceptions. Self-awareness is also critical to multicultural perspective taking because as one is exposed to other cultures, it will require personal growth. Continued growth in the area of self-awareness is most important, because self awareness will enable an individual to understand fully his or her reactions to the behavior, beliefs, attitudes, and so on of another (See Table 1).

Table 1.
Self-Awareness Competencies
_____

Knowledge of one's own culture and idiosyncratic biases
Ability to regulate emotions
Knowledge/understanding of the influence of one's
   perspective on his/her interactions and perceptions
Knowledge of one's strengths and weaknesses
Skills to achieve continued psychological growth
High levels of self-confidence
Self-regulation
Skills related to emotional intelligence
_____

Of the competencies listed in Table 1, perhaps the two most critical self-awareness competencies with respect to multicultural perspective taking are (1) knowledge of one's own culture and idiosyncratic biases and (2) the ability to regulate emotions.

Knowledge of one's own culture and idiosyncratic biases will enable leaders to recognize that they (and everyone else) understand their internal and external worlds using a cognitive structure (schema or personal construct system) that has been and continues to be developed based on the leaders' idiosyncratic experiences and cultural influences (Hofstede, 2001). Gaining an understanding of one's own beliefs, values, and biases, and realizing that the culture in which one is embedded is a primary source of them is one step toward being able to develop multicultural perspective taking.

An important element of this self-awareness competency is the understanding that perceptual reality is entirely subjective and that through strong social processes including social construction, groups of people (teams, armies, regions, societies, countries, etc.) come to a commonly defined subjective reality. This reality may become reified and be perceived as having

strong influence on the group to the point that it is perceived to be undeniable and unchangeable. Individuals in the group may perceive great risks associated with not accepting or with refusing to conform to the expectations produced by the socially constructed reality (if they are even able to think outside of the socially constructed boundaries). This socially constructed reality is culture (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Understanding that his or her own beliefs, values, and so on are unconsciously influenced by subjectively defined social constraints will increase one's awareness that this is also true for others.

Awareness of their idiosyncratic biases will aid leaders in better understanding their reactions to novel stimuli including customs, believes, and thoughts, and in increasing their openness to trying to understand other's worldviews. The knowledge and understanding of the influence of one's perspective on his/her interactions and perceptions are also highly critical to multicultural perspective taking. Every leader exists and acts within a cultural context. Therefore, this understanding also includes the ability to define one's self within that cultural context. As leaders interact with others, particularly those from diverse cultures, they must be aware that others are responding to the leader and to the leader's culture. Leaders should also become astutely aware of their schema for cultural understanding (i.e., they should understand the degree of expertise they possess in understanding cultures in general).

The ability to balance one's emotions is another essential self-awareness competency. Taking the perspective of another may evoke potent emotional reactions. Empathetic reactions are consistent with perspective taking. Empathy involves cognitive and affective components. One view of empathy suggests that situational characteristics will determine the degree to which the cognitive or affective component is accentuated (e.g., Gladstein, 1983). Although intellectual empathy (i.e., cognitive empathetic processes) and empathetic emotions (i.e., affective empathetic experiences) are typically viewed as coexisting (Duan & Hill, 1996), other research has supported the notion that intellectual empathy and empathetic emotions may have independent effects on interpersonal behavior (e.g., Gladstein, 1983).

Empathy is an affective response experienced as a result of understanding the emotional state of another, which matches or approximates what the other person is experiencing (Eisenberg, Wentzel, & Harris, 1998). Empathy may result in other emotional responses including sympathy, which is an affective response of sorrow, distress, or concern felt on behalf of the target. Sympathetic leaders will not necessarily experience the same emotion as the other, but they will experience other-oriented concern (cf. Eisenberg et al., 1998). Clearly, Army leaders may gain insight into the other through their experienced empathy, but they must learn to control affective empathy to avoid becoming sympathetic to an extent that interferes with their ability to accomplish the mission.

Empathy may evoke a variety of responses, including assisting the other person (Batson, Eklund, Chermot, Hoyt, & Ortiz, 2007), or removing the individual from one's presence or leaving the presence of the individual. The degree of personal distress is a factor that influences the behavioral implications of empathy and must be considered (Carlo, Allan, & Buhman, 1999; Eisenberg et al., 1998). Strong emotions typically diminish cognitive functioning, therefore, Army leaders must learn to regulate or balance their emotional responses as they take the perspective of another.

Although the self-awareness competencies represent a subset of personal competencies, they are particularly salient in multicultural perspective taking and therefore are highlighted in the present framework.

Personal and Interpersonal Competencies

The second set of Fundamental Competencies is the set of Personal and Interpersonal Competencies. The Army is already addressing many fundamental personal and interpersonal competencies related to multicultural perspective taking (Essens et al., 2005; Halpin, 2005).

In Table 2, Personal and Interpersonal competencies related to multicultural perspective taking are presented. These competencies are necessary to support the extraction and interpretation competencies, and to compare and integrate the acquired information with regional expertise and information from the schema for culture.

With respect to Personal competencies, Hofstede (2001) noted that inflated egos, low personal tolerance for uncertainty, histories of emotional instability, known racism or extreme political sympathies inhibit understanding and ability to function in novel cultures. Many personal competencies, such as self-management and self-motivation, may contribute to multicultural perspective taking. Integrity is essential as leaders attempt to gain information from others. Many of the personal competencies clearly require some form of cognitive processing. Leaders must be able to learn from experience, engage in continuous learning, and be adaptable (Kolb, 1984; Renwick, 2004) in order to increase their multicultural perspective taking ability. These competencies are required because as leaders encounter novel cultural situations, they must adapt and integrate the new information with existing information. In addition, Army leaders must able to maintain high situational awareness, make good situational assessments, and make good decisions as they extract cultural information. Managing ambiguity, information, and complexity (e.g., Rhinesmith, 1993) are essential skills in taking perspective, because the environment will provide too much information. It will be necessary for leaders to first organize and sort information, and then identify and eliminate superfluous information. These personal skills in combination with regional expertise and a schema for understanding culture will promote multicultural perspective taking competence.

Perhaps the most important personal competency is critical thinking. Critical thinking is the "ability to analyze and apply information logically using a systems perspective to creatively define and solve problems" and it involves pattern recognition skills (Organizational Research Group, 1998). Because, as noted above, another's cultural lens must be inferred on the basis of complex sets of sometimes extremely subtle information, critical thinking skills are essential.

With respect to Interpersonal competencies, competencies associated with leadership, maintaining commander intent, providing team maintenance, motivating others, providing and maintaining vision, and teamwork are important (Adler, 2002; Conner, 2000; Connerley & Pedersen, 2004; Maznevski & DiStefano, 2000; Essens et al., 2005). Conflict resolution, interpersonal sensitivity, emotional intelligence, and social awareness competencies enable

leaders to gain insight into another's perspective. Openness and trust building (e.g., Spreitzer, Shapiro, & Von Glinow, 2002) are essential in gaining information from others.

The IIR stated that the Army "should focus on interpersonal skills" and that leaders should learn to "treat someone how you would want to be treated or how a person should be treated (p. 34)." Treating an individual from another culture with respect was also emphasized.

Table 2.
Personal & Interpersonal Competencies

Personal Competencies	Interpersonal Competencies
Ability to learn through experience	Communication skills
Adaptability	Emotional intelligence
Continuous learning	Interpersonal sensitivity
Creativity	Leadership
Critical thinking	Listening
Decision making	Maintaining commander intent
Directing and controlling	Motivate others
Information management	Openness
Integrity	Providing team maintenance
Managing ambiguity	Providing and maintaining vision
Managing complexity	Relationship building
Motivate self	Social awareness
Planning	Teamwork
Self-management	Trust building
Situational assessment	
Situational awareness	

Most interpersonal competencies are important for multicultural perspective taking. However, if training focus must be limited to only a few competencies, then communication (including listening skills) and relationship building should be trained. Communication skills include the ability to express one's thoughts so that others can comprehend them accurately, listening skills, and the ability to convey meaning using verbal and nonverbal communication (Organizational Research Group, 1998). Communication competencies are required to build trust and to extract cultural clues. The ability to observe nonverbal communication in others and the awareness of one's own nonverbal communication are also communication competencies.

Relationship building competencies include the ability to develop and maintain positive relationships with others and the ability to build trust and to mitigate conflict. Relationship building also involves social awareness and interpersonal sensitivity (Organizational Research Group, 1998). Relationship building competencies are helpful for gaining regional expertise, extracting cultural clues, and acquiring information for developing a schema for cultural understanding.

In summary, of the competencies listed in Table 2, perhaps the three most critical personal and interpersonal competencies with respect to multicultural perspective taking are (1) critical thinking, (2) communication skills, and (3) relationship building competencies.

Regional Expertise

Culture exists at different levels and in different configurations of social groups, including ethnicity, religion, organization, and nation. Specific cultural knowledge associated with the cultural target(s) is essential to multicultural perspective taking. Because one of the most important cultural targets of Army leaders is national or regional, the specific cultural knowledge emphasized in this report is regional expertise.

Regional expertise is fundamental to multicultural perspective taking. Regional expertise, which includes knowledge about the specific region and target culture, enables leaders to utilize their self-awareness and personal and interpersonal competencies effectively. For example, in order to treat someone with respect, it is necessary to understand how that individual understands respect including the hand gestures, language, dress, facial expressions, behavior, and so on that signify respect. Similar knowledge is required to build trusting relationships. In other words, as, McFate noted, Soldiers must understand the enemy's' "interests, habits, intentions, beliefs, social organizations, and political symbols – in other words – their culture (p. 43)."

Regional expertise includes knowledge of regional geography, history, politics, social structures, religion, customs, values, and language. An understanding of the internal logic of the regional culture and of cultural paradoxes (Bird & Osland, 2003) will aid Army leaders.

One important consideration is that the "region" of regional expertise must be clear. Otherwise, leaders may misunderstand a situation and make critical mistakes. Regional knowledge in one area of a country may not apply to another area. Another consideration is to ensure that the content of training for regional expertise is current. Cultures change rapidly and out of date information may be less helpful than no information at all (cf. McFate, 2005).

Knowledge of "helpful stereotypes" (the term "regional prototypes" might be more useful in the Army context) may serve to provide leaders with a "quick reference" or "best guess" for the culture. These prototypes include a bundle of cultural information that is descriptive rather than evaluative and that is modified as experience increases (Bird & Osland, 2003). The caution, of course, is to avoid using the prototype mindlessly.

Conversely, Army leaders would benefit from knowing how others perceive them. In other words, understanding the stereotype that their counterparts have of them would be extremely useful. In addition, simply understanding that others are likely to be aware that they know little about Army leaders and those others are aware that Army leaders know little about them will aid leaders.

Typically, regional expertise is aimed at identifying differences between the target region (culture) and one's own region (culture), and knowledge of such differences is important. However, another influential component of regional expertise is the knowledge of similarities

between the regional culture and one's own culture. One function of knowledge of similarities is that it will aid leaders in developing common ground with others. Examples of general knowledge areas that contribute to regional expertise are listed in Table 3.

Table 3.
Regional Expertise
_____

Knowledge of regional geography, history, politics, social structures, religion, customs, values, language, etc.

Knowledge of similarities and differences between the regional and one's own cultures

Skill to use descriptive "helpful prototypes"

Knowledge of how those in the regional culture perceive the United States Army (and other self-relevant cultural targets)

_____

Summary of Fundamental Competencies

The complexity of multicultural perspective taking begins to become apparent in the discussion of the three sets of Fundamental Competencies. Competencies such as self-awareness, personal and interpersonal, and regional expertise are multifaceted. Each set contains many specific KSAs. The above discussion was not meant to be exhaustive. The competencies presented above are those considered to be most essential to multicultural perspective taking. While the Army is addressing fundamental competencies in training (Halpin, 2005), training should also call attention to the essential roles these competencies play in developing multicultural perspective taking.

In summary, seven fundamental competencies should be emphasized in developing multicultural perspective taking. These competencies are defined in Table 4. Two self-awareness competencies to develop are (1) knowledge of one's own culture and idiosyncratic biases and (2) the ability to regulate emotions. The three most critical personal and interpersonal competencies with respect to multicultural perspective taking are (1) critical thinking, (2) communication skills, and (3) relationship building competencies. Two aspects of regional expertise to focus on are (1) the knowledge of the region and language and (2) the knowledge of the similarities and differences between the regional and one's own cultures.

Table 4.

Multicultural Perspective taking Competencies: Fundamental Competencies and Definitions

	Definition
Self-Awareness	
	Technically, a personal competency that includes knowledge and development of self; knowledge of strengths and weaknesses; ability to reflect on one's self; self-monitoring and self-regulation
Knowledge of own culture and biases	Understanding own cultural values and idiosyncratic biases; knowledge of and understanding of one's perspective on his/her interactions and perceptions; ability to place one's self within a cultural context; understanding that one is viewed by others as being within a cultural context
Ability to regulate emotions	Ability to experience empathy without becoming sympathetic to the extent that it interferes with the ability to accomplish the mission
Personal and Interpersonal	
	Individual level knowledge, skills, and abilities required to assist others and to interact, associate, and work with others
Critical thinking	Ability to analyze and apply information logically using a systems perspective to creatively define and solve problems; involves pattern recognition skills and abstract critical thinking[2]
Communication	Ability to express one's thoughts so that others can comprehend them accurately; listening skills; ability to convey meaning and to understand using verbal and nonverbal communication[2]
Relationship building	Ability to develop and maintain positive relationships with others; ability to build trust and to mitigate conflict; involves social awareness and interpersonal sensitivity[2]
Regional Expertise	
Knowledge of region and language	Knowledge of specific region, country, or culture
	Knowledge of regional customs, geography, history, language, politics, religion, social structures, values, and so on; skill to use descriptive prototypes
Knowledge of similarities and differences between regional and own cultures	Knowledge of and understanding of implications of similarities and differences between regional and one's own cultures; understanding the internal logic and paradoxes of regional culture.

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Advanced Competencies to Support Multicultural Perspective taking

Advanced multicultural perspective taking competencies are those that must be developed and utilized in combination with the fundamental competencies. Advanced competencies do not necessarily need to be developed after fundamental competencies, but are considered to be advanced because they are competencies that typically are not explicitly trained. However, because Army leaders are increasingly expected to work in multicultural environments, these advanced competencies should be incorporated into future training programs.

The advanced competencies enable leaders to obtain cultural information "on site" and to evaluate and interpret it. Advanced competencies in combination with the fundamental competencies are associated with being able to extract and interpret another's understandings (schemas) and with ultimately being able to take the other's perspective.

Advanced competencies include three sets of complex competencies. A schema for cultural understanding guides the processing and organization of information related to culture. Extraction and interpretation competencies are required to elicit, observe, and understand cultural clues. These competencies are likely interrelated. The following sections describe the most essential competencies within each set.

Schema for Cultural Understanding

A schema for cultural understanding provides leaders with the capability to organize and make sense of novel cultural information. In general, schemas are "knowledge structures that guide the comprehender's interpretations, inferences, expectations, and attention" (Graesser & Nakamura, 1982, p. 60). Thus, cognition is organized and it is this structured knowledge that enables individuals to understand, interpret, and give meaning to stimuli (Rumelhart, 1980). Schemas serve to develop meanings and interpretations regarding any content domain. Schemas are particularly useful for interpreting ambiguous stimuli (Rumelhart, 1980), because essentially, schemas enable individuals to make sense of their experiences. Not only do schemas aid in sensemaking, they also influence the perception and recall of subsequent experiences. By affecting attention, encoding, and recall, schemas influence information processing. Schemas may contain information related to a specific domain, be interrelated, represent knowledge at all levels of abstraction, and influence perception and memory (Rumelhart, 1980). They are formed through direct or indirect experience (e.g., through interaction and communications with others). Once a schema is formed, new experiences or information that are not at odds with the existing schema may simply be added to it through the process of accretion. In addition, schemas are dynamic and may be adapted. Novel experiences for which existing schemas are not completely sufficient provide opportunities for the elaboration of an existing schema (e.g., tuning). If such experiences are radically different from existing schemas then cognitive restructuring may occur and a completely new schema may develop (Rumelhart, 1980).

Expert schemas increase an individual's ability to adapt to novel situations. Expert schemas enable experts to acquire new knowledge more easily and quickly than novices, because experts can understand and retain new information by linking it to their existing schemas

(Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1986). The schemas of experts can be characterized as deep and multileveled, with many connections between and within levels. Novices, in contrast, develop shallow schemas consisting of many details connected to a few general ideas.

In addition, experts have learned solutions to a wide variety of problems in the knowledge domain. Upon recognition of the problem, they can, with little effort, retrieve and apply a solution (Van Lehn, 1989). Thus, experts have the advantage of achieving solutions to problems quickly. Experts typically represent problems in terms of general, abstract principles, although novices categorize problems based upon concrete surface features (Borko & Livingston, 1989; Chi, Glaser, & Rees, 1982; Hillerband & Claiborn, 1990). An expert's recognition of the underlying principles often aids in reaching a correct solution. Because of their in-depth knowledge of the domain, experts can use efficient problem-solving strategies. For example, experts develop rules that allow them to engage in more forward search, a strategy that reduces strain on working memory and lessens the chance of making errors.

Army leaders must develop expert schemas for cultural understanding. Because schemas guide perception, one purpose of a schema for cultural understanding is to increase leaders' ability to extract and interpret cultural influences in novel situations. The more sophisticated (expert) and broad leaders' understandings of how to understand culture and cultural influences, the more adaptable and effective leaders will be. An expert schema for cultural understanding will increase the likelihood that leaders will perceive observable, including the most subtle and obscure, cultural clues (e.g., cultural artifacts). The schema for cultural understanding will also influence the interpretation of the cultural clues. For example, an expert schema will provide general categories to consider in the interpretation process. Schemas will provide a structure for organizing the cultural information.

Expert schemas from cultural understanding will include many types of knowledge (see Table 5 for examples.) Three components of a schema for cultural understanding may be of primary importance. One primary component is the understanding of cultural impact, which involves understanding that individuals exist simultaneously in multiple cultures and that these cultures will be influencing individuals' identity, thoughts, and behavior. An understanding of cultural impact will also include the knowledge that others have a view of one's own culture and some knowledge of what that view is. Perhaps most importantly, an expert understanding of the impact of culture will contain knowledge that variance exists within cultures and explicit recognition that similarities as well as differences exist across cultures (e.g., Hofstede, 2001; Pedersen, 2004).

Another important component of an expert schema for cultural understanding is the understanding of cultural identifiers, which involve knowledge that cultural information is embedded in artifacts, beliefs, values, assumptions (e.g., physical settings, stories, symbols, heroes, rituals, jargon/language, and social structure). In other words, leaders need to understand where cultural information and clues are embedded.

Understanding of cultural barriers is also an essential component of a schema for cultural understanding. This understanding includes the knowledge that cultural information is tacit and subtle. Leaders must understand that important cultural clues exist in what is and what is not

said, seen, heard, or done. Others from different cultures experience unverbalized self-talk, and it is critical to "hear" what someone is thinking but not saying. Furthermore, cultural barriers exist, in part, because some cultural information is so deeply assimilated that it exists in the subconscious. In addition, leaders must grasp that trust is a major cultural barrier and that trust and other barriers are expressed and understood differently in different cultures.

Other examples of knowledge that should be included in a schema for understanding culture are knowledge related to understanding that culture affects perceptions of reality (including one's own) and actually serves to "blind" one from fully deciphering and understanding another's culture. This understanding is clearly related to the fundamental competencies of self-awareness, particularly with respect to understanding one's own cultural biases (e.g., Hofstede, 2001; Pedersen, 2004).

A schema for understanding culture should contain the knowledge that culture influences verbal and nonverbal communication, and that it influences the expression of respect, saving face, trust, and other interpersonal variables, many of which will affect relationship building

Schema for cultural understanding may also include knowledge of macro-level features of national cultures. Understanding various differentiating national value profiles such as those articulated by Hofstede (2001; 1980), Schwartz (1992), Trompenaars (1994), and House (2004) may aid Army leaders in gaining an initial understanding of cultural differences. One caution is that relying exclusively on macro cultural features may limit multicultural perspective taking, because nationality may serve as a basis for stereotyping rather than for understanding, and because nationality represents only one cultural target of which there may be many. However, these models provide frameworks for perceiving and organizing differences between cultures. As mentioned above, an expert schema for cultural understanding would recognize similarities and differences.

An expert schema for cultural understanding should also include information regarding respect for each person's unique cultural experience with the recognition and acceptance that others' ways of viewing their internal and external worlds are valid. This does not mean that leaders should value another's way of thinking. Leaders must recognize that culture, indeed reality, is subjective and socially constructed, while simultaneously appreciating that subjective realities become reified and serve as potent forces guiding and restricting behavior (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

Moreover, a schema for understanding culture should include an understanding that others have developed an understanding of one's own culture or are also trying to understand one's own culture (Pedersen, 2004). In an antagonistic environment, cultural ignorance may be used as a weapon.

In summary, of the competencies listed in Table 5, perhaps the three most essential elements of a schema for cultural understanding with respect to multicultural perspective taking are (1) understanding of cultural impact, (2) understanding of cultural identifiers, and (3) understanding of cultural barriers. However, this is a preliminary assessment, and additional research is required to identify the contents of an expert schema on culture. Schema data

provided by cultural experts would be particularly informative in identifying the schema content to be trained.

Table 5.
Schema for Understanding Culture

Physical settings
Stories, symbols, heroes, rituals, jargon/language, etc.
Social structure and relationships
Artifacts, beliefs, values, assumptions
Similarities and differences across cultures
People existing in multiple cultures simultaneously
Verbal and nonverbal communication
Trust
Interrelationships among culture, identity, behavior
Subconscious responses
Each person's uniqueness
What is not seen, said, done, or heard
Hearing what someone is thinking but not saying
Disagreements within cultures
Identifying and overcoming barriers to inter-cultural communication
Understanding how others view one's own culture
Intercultural communication
Skills for entering new cultures
Cultural components and dimensions (e.g., values, time orientation)
Cultural barriers
Cultural identifiers
Cultural impact

Extraction Competencies

Cultural information is embedded in cultural artifacts including symbols, stories, nonverbal behavior, a group's priorities, and the way in which people disagree (and over what they disagree – i.e., the controversial issues). These are clues to understanding the culture and the individuals' world-view. Multicultural perspective taking requires that leaders are able to extract these clues.

Extraction competencies include the ability to recognize and eliminate or minimize cultural barriers. This competency must be engaged in order to use the ability to "hear" what someone is thinking but not saying, and to use unobtrusive measures to collect cultural data. Extraction competencies yield the cultural clues.

Extraction competencies include the abilities to observe, elicit, and mine cultural clues and cues. Surface differences and similarities between languages, religions, and customs may be readily apparent, but a leader with a well-developed schema for understanding culture will realize that subtle, underlying, implicit differences and similarities may also exist. Extraction competencies will enable leaders to extract this meaningful cultural information from limited data. The data collection techniques shown in Table 6 are designed to elicit interpretable cultural information. Leaders must be able to use data collection techniques to extract relevant cultural information and accurately assess its validity .

Table 6.
Data Collection Techniques

Anthropological techniques
Ethnographic techniques
Ethnoscience/cognitive anthropology techniques
Phenomenological techniques
Sensemaking
Perspective taking behaviors and cognitions
Social perspective taking behaviors and cognitions
Tactical questioning

Anthropologists conduct cultural audits using many extraction techniques including surveys, participatory action research, rapid ethnographic assessment, needs assessment, social impact assessment, focus group research, social network analysis, ego-centered networks, and specialized networks. In addition, anthropologists focus on tacit knowledge management (Gwynne, 2003). More recently, cognitive anthropologists have "new ethnography," which is "a set of field techniques designed to produce an understanding of cultural categories and distinctions meaningful to the members of a given society" (p. 332, Gwynne, 2003). The new ethnography is based on the idea that culture influences how people categorize everything and that these categories may be expressed by language. One such technique is to have people make lists. Although this technique is somewhat impractical in a military context, a keen ear or eye may detect relevant categorical information simply by listening and observing carefully.

Ethnoscience and cognitive anthropology techniques are very similar. Sample techniques include: collecting native terms, formulating culturally appropriate questions, identifying cultural/semantic domains and domain members, discovering taxonomic structures, selecting contrast sets for analysis, looking for attributes, and constructing a paradigm (Sidky, 2004).

The data collection and interpretation approach typically used by anthropologists produces ethnography. Ethnography is defined as "data about a particular culture, compiled, analyzed, digested, and written down" (p. 333; Gwynne, 2003). Ethnographic techniques are methods for extracting cultural information including how to enter a new culture, how to conduct interviews and participant observation, how to apply projective techniques, how to observe systematically, how to use third party information and documents, and how to glean information from conversations. Ethnographic techniques also address how to analyze the data collected by

thinking, triangulating, and identifying patterns using such devices as key events, maps, flowcharts, organizational charts, matrices, content analysis, and statistics. The extraction competencies of ethnography are multicultural perspective taking competencies.

Pedersen (2004) articulated many skills required for multicultural learning including interviewing, questioning, comparing, identifying assumptions, using feedback, listening, organizing facts, describing feelings, reporting, and summarizing. Perhaps one of the most essential abilities when extracting cultural information is to defer judgment and to remain open-minded (Pedersen, 2004). All relevant data must be respected. This issue highlights how self-awareness competencies are important with respect to extraction competencies.

One goal of phenomenological study is to understand the other's meanings (understandings). Phenomenological study is based on the notion that reality (including ones' self) is subjectively defined. According to Stablien (2002), "phenomenology is the study of human experience" (p. 2). Multicultural perspective taking includes understanding the other as the other understands himself or herself; therefore, phenomenological study is relevant. Phenomenological data collection involves sound description (e.g., based on observations, written work, statements) in order to gain an overall impression. Descriptions are analyzed by breaking them down into meaning units while retaining the informant's language. The meaning units are used to extract the other's meaning in terms of themes. The leader would interpret the themes using his/her language and then resynthesize it into a "situated description." That is, the leader would formulate an understanding of other's understanding of the given situation. (Theme extraction is clearly an extraction competency, and interpretation and resynthesis are interpretation competencies. This is an example of the close association of these competency sets.)

Sensemaking is a constructive process of creating meaning (Sondak, 2002). It is a process that involves attending to language. It is social, retrospective, enactive, selective, continuous and unavoidable. Much of sensemaking is associated with labeling and assimilating new information (Weick, 1995). Typically, sensemaking is a social process and requires interaction, input, and validation from others. In addition, people's actions tend to create the very environment they attempt to make sense of and sense is made by acting and observing ones' own behaviors. For humans, who encounter and engage in novel behavior and environments, sensemaking is a continuous and unavoidable experience (Sondak). Therefore, leaders' levels of self-awareness will affect their sensemaking processes. Furthermore, within the context of multicultural perspective taking, leaders making sense from another's perspective will have an increased understanding of the others' sense of identity.

Tactical questioning and interrogation are methods for extracting information. These methods are typically employed in difficult or hostile interpersonal situations (e.g., the target may be inclined to be less than totally honest). Nevertheless, these methods may have something to offer leaders who are attempting to extract cultural information. Techniques such as using language that the other uses and understands, treating the other with respect, attempting to think as one who is in the other's situation might think, considering what one who is in the other's situation might do, feel, or say, and remembering that there is good in most people (Inbau, Reid, & Buckley, 1986) will yield cultural information. The emphasis on interpreting and observing

nonverbal behavior is relevant to extraction competencies. Also, the technique of asking baiting questions and asking why others might be inclined to behave in particular manners are relevant techniques (Inbau et al.). These methods (and others discussed below) illustrate multicultural perspective taking as an iterative process. Extracted information will be interpreted. The interpretations will contribute to the schema for understanding culture and regional expertise, which will then inform extraction. Thus, some extraction techniques will be differentially effective in various situations depending, in part, on the degree of the leader's expertise.

Specific behaviors and cognitions associated with social or ethnic perspective taking (Quintana, 1994) are important extraction competencies. One set of social perspective taking skills facilitates one's own perspective taking and another set may help others to take perspective. Skills that elicit information about the other's point of view enhance perspective taking. These skills include role reversal techniques and direct questioning. Role reversal requires the leader and the other to provide each other's position, rationale, and feelings in an accurate and sincere manner (Johnson, 1971). Then, they provide feedback to each other. Role reversal skills increase the quality and quantity of accurate information available to leaders about the other and enable the leader to provide the other with accurate information. A leader using direct questioning would simply direct questions to the other regarding the processes and feelings (Falk & Johnson, 1977). Another social perspective taking behavior is self-disclosure, which aids the other to develop an accurate understanding of the leader. High perspective taking is associated with high self-disclosure of information about one's stance on issues, feelings, and thoughts. It is also associated with framing information such that the other may readily understand it (e.g., Feffer & Suchotliff, 1966). It should be noted that the other typically reciprocates disclosure, thus it serves to increase perspective taking for both parties (Sermat & Smyth, 1973).

Relationship building lays a foundation for perspective taking behaviors. Communicating interest in the other and creating a psychologically safe environment for disclosure increases the likelihood of acquiring meaningful information regarding another's perspective (Falk & Johnson, 1977; Johnson, 1971). This is an example of the intricate relationships among personal and interpersonal competencies with the extraction competencies.

Although many of the extraction techniques described above may appear to be impractical in combat situations, they may be readily applicable in other situations in which Army leaders work. In addition, aspects of the techniques may be adaptable to various situations. Regardless of the techniques used, Hofstede's (1991) cautions regarding collection of cultural data should be heeded when utilizing extraction competencies. He suggested that researchers (in this case, leaders) should remain descriptive and nonjudgmental, collect verifiable data (maintain objectivity), and resist stereotyping.

Extraction competencies are listed in Table 7. Three primary extraction competencies are the focus here. First, the ability to elicit and detect cultural information requires effective observation, communication, questioning and interviewing skills. Leaders must use multiple sources of cultural information (e.g., informants, media). Second, the ability to suspend judgment (and to minimize one's own biases and to use such techniques as role reversal, paraphrasing, direct questioning, and egocentrism reduction). Third, the ability to identify patterns and

triangulate involves the ability to systematically and reliably identify and comprehend consistencies, patterns, and relationships among pieces of cultural information. In addition, leaders must be able to identify similarities, common ground, mutual knowledge, and differences.

In summary, the three primary extraction competencies are (1) ability to elicit and detect cultural information, (2) the ability to suspend judgment, and (3) the ability to identify patterns and triangulate.

Table 7.
Extraction Competencies

Skills and abilities for eliciting and detecting cultural information:
    Observing
    Listening
    Communicating
    Tactical questioning
    Culturally appropriate interviewing
    Using informants
    Using second source data (e.g., newspapers, media)
    Selecting contrast sets
    Collecting data unobtrusively
Skill in using such techniques as:
    Role reversal
    Paraphrasing
    Direct questioning
    Egocentrism-reduction
Ability to:
    Identify patterns and priorities
    Triangulate information
    Identify domain members
    Discover taxonomic structures
    Remain nonjudgmental and "objective"
    Disagree with someone from another culture
    Uncover controversial issues
    Extract the unspoken thoughts
    Decrease cultural barriers

Interpretation Competencies

The various definitions of culture presented above demonstrate the complexity of the phenomenon, but cognition is a core of most definitions. For example, culture is considered to include shared beliefs, thinking styles, a set of cognitions (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988), layers of cognition (Schein, 1985), the correct way to think, shared meanings (Rentsch, 1990; Schein, 1985), cognitive frames of reference (Louis, 1980), patterned ways of thinking (Kluckhohn,

1951), programming of the mind (Hofstede, 1980), and ideas, beliefs, and knowledge (Fetterman, 1989). Cognition provides the cultural lens with acuity. In this regard, culture is conceptualized, in part, as a schema (organized knowledge structure) that enables interpretation and understanding of artifacts.

Therefore, leaders must be able to interpret the extracted cultural clues as the other interprets them. Leaders must interpret the clues from the perspective of individuals within the context of the individuals' cultures (and schemas). The leaders will use extracted information, their schema for understanding culture, their regional expertise, their self-awareness competencies, and their critical thinking (a personal competency) in combination as they apply interpretation competencies.

Interpretation competencies are those competencies that are required to understand the extracted cultural information as a member of the culture would (see Table 8.) Essentially, interpretation competencies enable the leader to reveal the other's schema for making sense of or attributing meaning to cultural artifacts. These competencies include the ability to synthesize and integrate extracted information in order to identify similarities/common ground/mutual knowledge and to identify differences (Quintana, 1994). Typically, there will be gaps in the extracted information. Therefore, leaders must be capable of imputing information in order to fill in the missing information.

Perhaps one of the most important interpretation competencies is the ability to reconstruct the world cognitively. That is, leaders must be able to suspend their own ways of thinking and use, at least momentarily, the other's way of thinking. Leaders must possess the ability to understand "objective" data from multiple subjective perspectives. Army leaders must not only recognize and accept subjective understanding, but also must be able to think in ways different from how they typically think. In addition, cognitive reconstruction requires the ability to shift from one mental reconstruction to another.

Table 8.
Interpretation Competencies

Synthesize and integrate extracted information
Coordinate and integrate perspectives
Identify similarities/common ground/mutual knowledge
Identify differences
Cognitively reconstruct the world
Role taking
Develop accurate schemas of individual, group, organization, region,
    understandings, expectations, beliefs, emotions, etc.
Understand the relationships between culture, identity, and behavior
Visualize
Defer judgment
Retain objectivity

Role taking is considered a social perspective taking skill and requires "the ability to infer another's capabilities, attributes, expectations, feelings, and potential reactions" (Selman, 1971, p. 1722). In taking another's role, leaders must be able to differentiate their own perspective from that of the other. Furthermore, they must be able to cognitively assess the emotional and cognitive elements of the other's perspective.

Another important interpretation competency is the ability to visualize. Interpreting cultural clues from the perspective of another requires the ability to imagine and reflect. This ability enables leaders to maintain cognitive flexibility in order to mentally evaluate alternative interpretations. The ability to visualize includes the ability to think creatively, to visualize, and to impute missing information, and requires both openness to experience and tolerance for ambiguity.

The culminating interpretation competency is the ability to integrate and ascertain meaning. This is a highly complex competency that involves the ability to ascertain meaning from synthesizing, coordinating, and integrating extracted information. This ability requires a high degree of critical thinking

In summary, three primary interpretation competencies are the: (1) ability to cognitively reconstruct, (2) ability to visualize, and (3) ability to integrate and ascertain meaning.

Summary of Advanced Competencies

The complexity of multicultural perspective taking becomes apparent in the discussion of the three sets of Advanced Competencies. A schema for cultural understanding, extraction competencies, and interpretation competencies are each multifaceted. An expert schema for cultural understanding involves intricate organization of a large knowledge set. Extraction and interpretation competency sets each contain many specific competencies. The discussion of the advanced competencies was not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to highlight the primary competencies most essential to multicultural perspective taking. The advanced competencies represent a conceptualization of new sets of competencies that the Army should consider training. The training should include articulation of the essential roles these competencies play in developing multicultural perspective taking. In addition, training should draw attention to the relationships among the fundamental and advanced competencies in multicultural perspective taking.

In summary, nine advanced competency components should be emphasized in developing multicultural perspective taking. These competencies are defined in Table 9. Three components of schema for cultural understanding to develop are: (1) understanding of cultural impact, (2) understanding of cultural identifiers, and (3) understanding of cultural barriers. The three most critical extraction competencies with respect to multicultural perspective taking are: (1) the ability to elicit and detect cultural information, (2) the ability to suspend judgment, and (3) the ability to identify patterns and triangulate. Three principal interpretation competencies are: (1) the ability to reconstruct cognitively, (2) the ability to visualize, and (3) the ability to integrate and ascertain meaning.

Table 9.
Multicultural Perspective taking Competencies: Advanced Competencies and Definitions

Sets of Advanced Competencies and Primary Competencies in Each Set	Definition
Schema for Understanding Culture	Capability to organize and make sense of novel cultural information
Understanding of cultural impact	Understanding of simultaneous multiple cultures; the relationships among culture, identity, behavior, thoughts; how others' view one's own culture; variance exists within cultures; and similarities exist across cultures
Understanding of cultural identifiers	Understanding that cultural information is embedded in artifacts, beliefs, values, assumptions (e.g., physical settings, stories, symbols, rituals, language, and social structure); awareness of indicators that confirm or counter previous training or information
Understanding of cultural barriers	Understanding that cultural information is tacit and subtle and exists in what is and what is not seen, said, heard, or done; exists in subconscious; understanding that important concepts are expressed and understood differently in different cultures (e.g., trust).
Extraction	Ability to observe, elicit, and mine cultural clues and cues.
Ability to suspend judgment	Ability to minimize one's own biases; ability to reflect on other's perspective and skills to accurately extract other's perspective (role reversal, paraphrasing, direct questioning, egocentrism reduction); ability to identify what another is attending to and interpreting
Ability to elicit and detect cultural information	Observation, communication, questioning and interviewing skills; using multiple sources of cultural information (e.g., informants, media)
Ability to identify patterns and triangulate	Ability to systematically and reliably identify and comprehend consistencies, patterns and relationships among pieces of cultural information; ability to identify similarities/common ground/mutual knowledge and differences
Interpretation	Ability to understand extracted cultural information as a member of the culture would
Ability to integrate and ascertain meaning	Ability to ascertain meaning from synthesizing, coordinating, and integrating extracted information
Ability to visualize	Ability to imagine and reflect, to think creatively, to visualize, and to impute missing information. (Requires openness to experience, tolerance for ambiguity, creativity)
Ability to cognitively reconstruct	Ability to understand "objective" data from multiple subjective perspectives; ability to shift from one reconstruction to another.

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Framework of Multicultural Perspective taking Competencies

The complex nature of multicultural perspective taking is evident in the review of the fundamental and advanced competency sets. Although some of the linkages among the competencies were presented above, a preliminary framework of multicultural perspective taking and a description of the influences among the competencies are presented in this section.

The goal of multicultural perspective taking is to function effectively within a cross-cultural environment. As shown in Figure 1, extraction and interpretation competencies, advanced competencies, are the core of the multicultural perspective taking framework. The arrow indicates that extraction of cultural information is necessary for the interpretation of cultural information. Interpretation is also directly influenced by the leader's regional expertise and schema for understanding culture. Although reciprocal relationships may exist among the competencies identified, but the figure primarily indicates directions of likely interest for the development of cross-cultural perspective taking.

Regional expertise is a specialized portion of the schema for understanding culture. Although schema for understanding culture applies to all cultures, regional expertise includes a specific schema containing organized knowledge regarding the region (or target culture). These two schemas will be intricately related (i.e., a regional expertise schema may be nested in the schema for understanding culture). Therefore, increased development in one will most likely lead to increased development of the other. Regional expertise and a well-developed schema for cultural understanding influence interpretation. Indeed, one form of interpretation is to compare cultural information to cultural knowledge contained in the schema for cultural understanding and regional expertise. The product of this process may be subjected to visualization, integration, and cognitive reconstruction (i.e., interpretation competencies) yielding a refined interpretation of cultural information. This interpretation may iterate through the schemas and interpretation competencies until an accurate interpretation is obtained. This process will serve to strengthen interpretation competencies and to develop regional expertise and the schema for understanding culture. The latter two will enhance the leader's ability to extract cultural information.

A well-developed schema for understanding culture and a high degree of regional expertise will support leaders' ability to elicit and detect cultural information, because they offer a sophisticated understanding of what to elicit and therefore enable leaders to attend to (and to detect) and utilize relevant cultural information. In addition, leaders' ability to identify patterns and to triangulate will be enhanced to the extent that they possess well-developed schemas for understanding culture and a high degree of regional expertise.
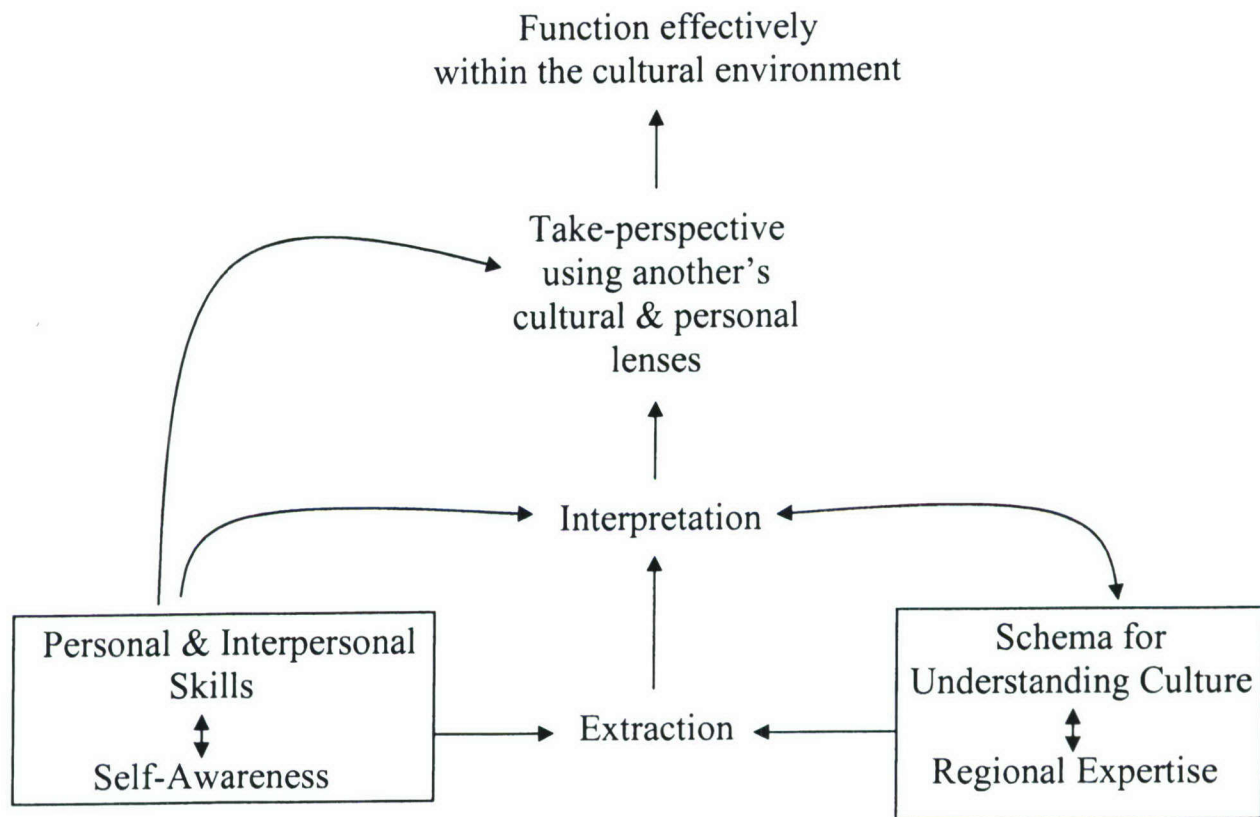
Function effectively
within the cultural environment

Take-perspective
using another's
cultural & personal
lenses

Interpretation

Personal & Interpersonal
Skills

Self-Awareness

Extraction

Schema for
Understanding Culture

Regional Expertise

Figure 1. Primary Elements of a Framework of Multicultural Perspective taking
Competencies

Extraction competencies are supported by personal and interpersonal competencies and
self-awareness competencies. Communication skills, relationship building skills, and critical
thinking (personal and interpersonal competencies) will aid leaders as they reflect on another's
perspective, elicit and detect cultural information, and identify patterns and triangulate cultural
information (i.e., extraction competencies). Self-awareness enables leaders to avoid becoming
overly influenced or blinded by their own cultural and idiosyncratic biases as they seek to extract
cultural information. Emotions out of balance will also interfere with extraction; therefore,
leaders must possess the ability to regulate emotions in order to extract cultural information
effectively

Although any experience may potentially improve one's self-awareness competencies,
this is not reflected in Figure 1. However, self-awareness competencies and many personal and
interpersonal competencies will likely have reciprocal relationships. This relationship is probably
strongest for the interpersonal competencies, because self-awareness is considered essential for
developing interpersonal skills (Browning & Van Velsor, 1999) and some personal competencies
(e.g., self-regulation).

One relationship not shown in Figure 1 is the potential moderating effect of the self-
awareness competencies on the relationship between extraction competencies and personal and

interpersonal competencies. It is likely that the extent to which one's personal and interpersonal competencies may be maximally effective in supporting extraction competencies is dependent upon the development of one's self-awareness competencies.

Self-awareness competencies will be related to interpretation competencies. For example, lack of self-awareness regarding one's biases toward people from a particular country (i.e., stereotypes) may cause a leader to misinterpret the behavior of a coalition partner from that country. In addition, critical thinking, a personal competency, is also essential to the effective utilization of interpretation competencies.

Again, this model is preliminary, but it offers a starting point for understanding multicultural perspective taking skills. Additional data obtained from military and nonmilitary individuals who have experience working in cultures other than their own and who have experience taking the perspective of others from multiple cultures will augment the information obtained from literature (and from the authors' personal experiences) on which the model is based.

Influences among Multicultural Perspective taking Competencies

The framework presented here is intended to highlight some of the linkages among the multicultural perspective taking competencies. The relationships among these variables may be somewhat more complex than presented in Figure 1. Another depiction of the interrelationships among the competencies is presented in Table 10. An "x" indicates that the competency listed in the row influences the competencies in the category reflected in the column. Again, this depiction is not intended to show all of the relationships, but rather to highlight the competencies most closely related to other competency sets. Although this depiction is general, it does illuminate the competencies that are closely related to other competency categories suggesting that they might be the focus of early training efforts.

Scanning Table 10, it becomes apparent that knowledge of one's own culture and biases, a self-awareness competency, is an important competency because it is expected to be related to all of the other competency sets. This type of self knowledge will enable leaders to better develop and utilize their personal and interpersonal skills, it will minimize bias in understanding and using regional expertise and a schema for cultural understanding, and it will enable leaders to use their extraction and interpretation competencies effectively. Similarly, critical thinking is a crucial personal competency that is related to all other competency sets. Because all of the competencies have a cognitive orientation, the notion that critical thinking is related to all other competency sets is no surprise.

Other important competencies are both of the regional expertise competencies, which are related to four competency sets. Also related to four competency sets are understanding cultural impact and understanding cultural barriers, which are components of schema for cultural understanding. Although these competencies and regional expertise may actually influence self-awareness, their relationships to the other competencies are considered more important for multicultural perspective taking. An extraction competency, the ability to suspend judgment, and an interpretation competency, ability to cognitively reconstruct, are also related to four

competency sets. Again, although they may be related to regional expertise, the other relationships may be more significant for multicultural perspective taking.

The ability to balance emotions (a self-awareness competency) is associated with three sets of competencies, personal and interpersonal, extraction, and interpretation. Also associated with three other competency sets is understanding cultural identifiers (schema for cultural understanding). Additionally, it is likely to be related to regional expertise, extraction competencies, and interpretation competencies. The ability to visualize, an interpretation competency, is expected to be connected to self-awareness, personal and interpersonal competencies, schema for cultural understanding, and extraction competencies.

Reviewing the table by evaluating the information in the columns reveals that the advanced competencies are perhaps the most complex, because they are hypothesized to be associated with more competencies from other sets. For example, the set of extraction competencies is expected to be linked to all of the competencies in the other sets. The set of interpretation competencies and schema for understanding culture are expected to be associated with eleven and nine, respectively of the 13 competencies from the other sets. In contrast, the fundamental competencies of self-awareness and regional expertise are expected to be associated with five competencies from the other sets. The personal and interpersonal competency set, which is a large set, is expected to be linked to eight other competencies.

Table 10.

Influences among Multicultural Perspective taking Competencies

Primary Competencies within Competency Categories	Fundamental Competencies			Advanced Competencies		
	Self-Awareness	Personal and Interpersonal	Regional Expertise	Schema for Understanding Culture	Extraction	Interpretation
Self-Awareness						
Knowledge of own culture and biases		x	x	x	x	x
Ability to balance emotions		x			x	x
Personal and Interpersonal						
Communication skills					x	
Relationship building competencies					x	
Critical thinking	x		x	x	x	x
Regional Expertise						
Knowledge of region and language		x		x	x	x
Knowledge of similarities and differences between regional and own cultures		x		x	x	x
Schema for Understanding Culture						
Understanding of cultural impact		x	x		x	x
Understanding of cultural identifiers			x		x	x
Understanding of cultural barriers		x	x		x	x
Extraction						
Ability to suspend judgment	x	x		x		x
Ability to elicit and detect cultural information				x		x
Ability to identify patterns and triangulate				x		x

Interpretation

Ability to integrate and ascertain meaning	x			x
Ability to visualize	x	x		x
Ability to cognitively reconstruct	x	x	x	x

Note: An "x" indicates that the competency listed in the row will influence the competencies in the category in the column.

Summary of Multicultural Perspective taking Competencies

The knowledge of macro-level features of national cultures may increase of cultural awareness and understanding by differentiating national value profiles. Frameworks such as those developed by Hofstede (1980), Schwartz (1992), and Trompenaars (1994) may be beneficial in gaining an initial understanding of cultural differences. However, relying exclusively on macro cultural features may be limiting, because nationality may serve as a basis for stereotyping rather than for understanding.

The ability to extract meaningful cultural information from observable data is critical for Army leaders to gain a deeper and more functional understanding of their cultural environments than that afforded by knowledge of cultural profiles. Meaning is embedded in cultural artifacts in the forms of beliefs, values, and assumptions (Schein, 1992). Army leaders need to develop skills in extracting meaningful, but tacit, cultural information from limited available data.

For Army leaders, the ability to take the perspective of individuals within the context of their culture is critical for effective collaboration and coordination with coalition partners and host nationals. Leaders with highly developed multicultural perspective taking competencies are able to see the world through another's cultural lens. The ability to take the perspective of individuals within the context of their culture enables Army leaders to function effectively within the culture and in interactions with others.

Competencies associated with multicultural perspective taking may be categorized in two major sets, fundamental and advanced competencies. The competencies across sets are proposed to be related to one another as represented in Figure 1 and Table 10. These representations of the linkages should be useful in planning and developing training programs for multicultural perspective taking. In addition, all competencies have a cognitive orientation and all of them are relevant to a general approach to multicultural perspective taking (with the exception of regional expertise).

Future Research to Support Development of Training Systems

The ultimate goal of a research program on multicultural perspective taking is to produce a training that increases Army leaders' abilities to function effectively in multicultural environments. Although the framework and best training practices presented above offer reasonable starting points for future research, additional research is needed to determine how to build the best training system. Suggestions for future research and project work include: (1) composing a multidisciplinary research team, (2) applying best practices for developing training systems including the use of the best practices for adult and intercultural learning, (3) determining a realistic sequence for competency training, and (4) incorporating training evaluation and realizing the effort will likely be iterative.

Composing a Multidisciplinary Research Team

The multicultural perspective taking competencies were extracted from a broad review of literatures in cultural anthropology, social anthropology, counseling psychology, developmental psychology, social psychology, organizational psychology, organizational behavior, international business, and adult education. This foundational work serves as a starting point, but, obviously, these competencies are complex and future work will be well served by a project team that includes members from multiple disciplines. Expertise represented on the team should include the areas of industrial/organizational psychology, training, cognitive and cultural anthropology, cross-cultural counseling psychology, international business, adult education, and intercultural communications and relations.

Applying Best Practices for Developing Training Systems and Using Best Training Practices for Adult and Intercultural Learning

The application of the best practices for developing training systems should be applied in the development of training systems for multicultural perspective taking competencies. Training principles from industrial/organizational psychology and the organizational training literature (e.g., Goldstein & Ford, 2002) will serve as a good foundation. For example, according to traditional training research, in order to develop effective training systems, a needs assessment must be conducted in which the requisite competencies to be trained are identified (Goldstein & Ford, 2002). Although the above work serves as a foundation, effective training systems tend to be based on needs assessments that include task, person, and context analyses. Additional data obtained from Army leaders who are working within multicultural contexts should be included in the identification of the most essential competencies and in the development of the training system.

Information from subject matter experts should inform the training. For example, Army leaders encounter a wide-range of situations requiring multicultural perspective taking competencies, including engaging the enemy, dealing with the local populace, and teaming with coalition partners. Furthermore, they interact with military personnel, civilians, and children in multicultural contexts. The differences in competency needs for these various contexts are important to understand when developing a training system. In addition, the expert schema for understanding culture may be the most important multicultural perspective taking competency and subject matter experts can provide essential information required for training this competency.

The training system should include the best practices for adult learning (e.g., Kolb, 1984). Reported above is a review of the best practices for developing multicultural perspective taking competencies that revealed such techniques as focused readings, practical exercises, and role-modeling as useful training tools for the multicultural perspective taking competencies. These best practices are based on methods used in the adult learning and intercultural training literatures.

The training system must also be practical and may include stand-alone components amenable to delivery via CD-ROM or web technology. For example, one possible component of

the training could be interactive videos that present opportunities for practicing skills and that provide feedback. Possibly, a branching method could be incorporated in which trainees respond to a virtual other and feedback would appear as the other's response to the trainee. An explanation of the other's response would be provided or offered as another learning opportunity. In general, the training system should contain multiple methods and technologies.

Determining a Realistic Sequence for Competency Training

Subject matter experts, task analysis, and contextual analysis information will aid in determining a realistic sequence for training competencies. Although the competencies are categorized as fundamental and advanced, this distinction was based on what the Army is currently training versus what might be added to training. However, the most appropriate sequencing may involve crossing these categories.

As described above, Army leaders exist at three levels, direct, organizational, and strategic. It is quite likely that some blended set of fundamental and advanced competencies are needed at each level. However, the emphasis or use of multicultural perspective taking competencies most likely differs at each level. A better understanding of these differences will enhance the possibility of developing a properly sequenced training system that takes advantage of the "on-the-job" training opportunities available at one level of leadership that will develop leaders' competencies for the next level.

Incorporating Training Evaluation and Realizing the Effort Will Likely Be Iterative

The contexts in which leaders are expected to apply multicultural perspective taking are complex. Therefore, constant evaluation and refinement of the training system will be necessary. The effort to address multicultural challenges is large and will likely be in a continuous state of improvement. Training systems should include feedback loops such that evaluations of current efforts provide insights into improving new efforts.

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